

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2026

Legislative Document

No. 2066

S.P. 855

In Senate, December 17, 2025

An Act to Establish the Child Care Employment Award

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on December 15, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator INGWERSEN of York.

Cosponsored by Senators: BENNETT of Oxford, President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland,
MOORE of Washington, NANGLE of Cumberland, ROTUNDO of Androscoggin,
Representative: Speaker FECTION of Biddeford.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3731-B is enacted to read:

§3731-B. Child Care Employment Award

The Child Care Employment Award is established in the department in order to provide child care subsidies to recipients who are employed by child care facilities or family child care providers licensed pursuant to section 8301-A and whose children are receiving care from such licensed child care facilities or licensed family child care providers. Subsidy awards must be provided directly to the child care facility or family child care provider. The department may adopt rules regarding subsidy award amounts, waiting list management, quality standards and limitations on the number of children supported. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. 2. Child Care Employment Award staffing. The Department of Health and Human Services shall establish a full-time, permanent staff position in the Office of Child and Family Services to administer the Child Care Employment Award pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3731-B.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF

Child Care Services 0563

Initiative: Provides ongoing funding for the Child Care Employment Award.

GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$0	\$3,000,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$3,000,000

Child Care Services 0563

Initiative: Establishes one Social Services Program Specialist II position to administer the Child Care Employment Award and provides funding for related All Other costs.

GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	1.000
Personal Services	\$0	\$119,041
All Other	\$0	\$7,256
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$126,297

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
DEPARTMENT OF
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

	2025-26	2026-27
GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$3,126,297

DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS

\$0 \$3,126,297

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Child Care Employment Award in order to provide child care subsidies to recipients who are employed by licensed child care facilities or family child care providers and whose children are receiving care from such facilities or providers. It provides that subsidy awards must be provided directly to the child care facility or family child care provider. It authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to adopt routine technical rules regarding subsidy award amounts, waiting list management, quality standards and limitations on the number of children supported. It also requires the department to establish a full-time position to administer the award and increases the award program's funding to \$3,000,000.